


THE INDIAN MOHAMMEDANS : THEIR  
PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE.

BY

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A Paper on the Indian Mohammedans was read by Mr. A. Yusuf-Ali, M.A., LL.M., I.C.S., at a Meeting of the Indian Section of the Society of Arts, London, on Thursday afternoon, December 13th, the Right Hon. Lord Ampthill, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., in the chair.

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The CHAIRMAN, in introducing the author of the paper, said that Mr. Yusuf-Ali was a member of the Indian Civil Service, and that qualification ought to be a passport anywhere in the British Empire. Many present knew what it meant to be a member of that Service, but to the generality of Englishmen the members of the Indian Civil Service were unknown, except under one or other of two conditions. The first was that the civilians made themselves objectionable to the highest authorities; and the second was that the highest authorities made themselves objectionable to the civilians. He would not lend point to his remarks by doing anything so invidious as particularising, but he thought the audience agreed with him that that was the case. Besides being a member of the Indian Civil Service, Mr. Yusuf-Ali was also an Indian member of that Service. He hoped the audience realised what an amount of character, energy, and enterprise it meant for a young man of India to come over to this country, pursue his studies here, and enter into competition with Englishmen in order to get into the Indian Civil Service. Mr. Yusuf-Ali had done that. The author came from a part of India (the United Provinces) with which he (the Chairman) was not acquainted, so he could not speak of his service there, but he knew that Mr. Yusuf-Ali had already made a name for himself in this country, and that he was a man of very exceptional literary ability. The fact that he gave up time when he was on furlough to read a paper of such an interesting nature spoke for itself. But, in addition to that, Mr. Yusuf-Ali had written a monograph on the subject of silk fabrics, which was published by the Government of India; an article on civic life in India, which appeared in the *Asiatic Quarterly Review*; and so versatile were his talents that he was able to write a criticism of Goethe in the *Contemporary Review*. Nothing could be more welcome to Anglo-Indians than that an Indian member of the great public service which administered the vast dominion of India under the British Crown should come to England and of his own free will endeavour to give information about his fellow subjects, and generally to allow those present to make acquaintance with one of them, and through him to hear the views and ideas of his fellow countrymen.

Mr. YUSUF-ALI then read his paper : —

#### THE INDIAN MOHAMMEDANS: THEIR PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE.

“The more I learn about the Mohammedans,” said a recognised authority on Indian matters the other day, “the more I learn to respect them.” If the British public could entertain a similar feeling for the Indian Mohammedans, they would find it a little easier to understand some of the controversies which vex the Indian atmosphere. They would also, I fear, feel a little less confidence in putting forward those cut and dried schemes which, like English furniture, make a splendid show in Tottenham Court Road, but are apt to warp in the exceedingly dry climate of the Indian hot weather. It is certain that an imperfect appreciation of the Indian Mohammedans is at the bottom of much of the misunderstanding that exists between them and the English, and between them and their Hindu fellow-subjects. Let us see if we can briefly review their past history, their present position, and their future prospects. In doing so let us hold in view not so much a narration of events as an appreciation of the moral factors which have made the Indian Mohammedans what they are, and which will doubtless operate in their attitude to future events.

The interest of the early Mohammedans in India was three-fold, viz.: commercial, missionary, and political. The ordinary assumption that it was purely and exclusively political, can be easily shown to rest on a fallacy. To some minds, nurtured on stories like that of “Alexander and the Robber,” high politics seem always identified with pillage and brigandage. In their eyes no wars can be right even if they are just. But if the causes of the great movements in political history are examined and analysed,

they will be found to be of enduring importance only if they are the visible embodiment of moral and economic forces, while they merely float and burst like bubbles if they are called forth by the ephemeral prejudices or passions of unthinking multitudes.

The commercial interest in India of the Arabs and other nations of Western Asia (including Egypt, if we may adopt the definition of Herodotus), dated from a time long anterior to the birth of Islam. The Egyptians had a considerable maritime commerce with India before their country fell under the influence of Greece and Rome. The Arabs of the Red Sea littoral were always intimately connected with Egypt, and doubtless learnt from that country (if they had not discovered it themselves) the secret of the monsoons and, therefore, of the navigation of the Indian Ocean. When Egypt fell into confusion, they became sole masters of the commerce and carrying trade of the East. The quest after spices, gems, and ivory cast a glamour round the names of Ceylon and India, and the name of India (Hind) is even found as a feminine personal name among Arab women in pre-Islamic poetry. The tradition that Adam's Peak in Ceylon was the place where our first parents set foot on their fall from the Garden of Eden, invested the island with something like sacred associations, and in later times we hear of the pilgrimage of Arabs to what they conceived to have been the cradle of the human race.

Such was the soil of ideas, in which, with the dawn of Islam, was sown a seed of greater vitality than any which had germinated before. The vision of Islam was the brotherhood of the world, the union of all in a universal and democratic Church and State. The missionary spirit was strong and fervid. Says the Koran xlii. 14 :—

“Summon them to the Faith, and walk righteously therein, following the law rather than their desires. Say—‘I believe in all the Revelation that God has sent, and I am bidden to decide justly between you. God is our Lord and your Lord. We have our works, and ye have your works ; between us and you let there be no strife. God will make us all one, and to Him shall we return.’ ”

It is uncertain whether the settlement of the Mappilas (Moplas) in Southern India owes its origin to missionary or to commercial motives. Their advent is dated back to the second century of the Hijra (eighth century A.D.), about the same time as the Arab con-

quest of Sindh in the north.\* They still form an important Arab colony in the Tamil country. So completely have they assimilated themselves to their surroundings that they speak Tamil, read the Koran in that language, and are somewhat isolated from the rest of the Mohammedans of India. In the Khilafat of Mansur, and subsequently, several Arab missionary settlements were established, and their representatives now form well-knit and prosperous Nonconformist Muslim communities on the west coast of India.

The political dealings of the Mohammedans with India are better known, because the eye can follow the movements of the big battalions, whereas the still, small voice that inspires them requires delicately adjusted minds, like Marconigraph receivers, to perceive its ethereal promptings. In the Khilafat of Osman (643-55), Syria and Egypt already formed part of the Muslim Empire ; and on the east Irák formed a frontier province, with the eyes of pro-consuls already watching for new worlds to conquer. The prospects, however, of a political extension in the east were not favourable. A man sent to the frontier of India returned with this report :—“The water is scarce, the fruits are poor, and the robbers are bold. If the troops sent are few they will be slain ; if many, they will starve.” The Khalifa asked whether he spoke accurately or poetically (*dichtung oder wahrheit* ?) ; to which he replied that he spoke according to his knowledge.†

It was early in the eighth century of the Christian era that the first political foothold was obtained by the Mohammedans in India. A vigorous force of expansion was then pushing the outposts of the Arabian Empire in all directions. In 710 Khorasan was captured, and the first serious contact of the Mohammedans with the Tartars began. In 711, in the extreme west, Tarik crossed the Gates of Hercules into Spain, and built the strong fortress of Gibraltar. In 713 Mohammed ibn Kásim, or, as he is usually styled, Mohammed Kásim, captured the town of Multan, which was then included in Sindh. At that time, apparently, there were already some Muslims in the country. The *Chach-náma*, which is our great authority for the stirring story of the Arab conquest of Sindh, gives us incidentally a picture of the state

\* T. W. Arnold : “The Preaching of Islam,” p. 216 : “The Tohfât-ul-Mujâhedîn,” translated by M. J. Rowlandson.

† Sir H. M. Elliot's “History of India as told by its own Historians,” I., 116.

of the country. The people were divided into many races and tribes, and the Jats and the Meds welcomed the conquerors. The castes of merchants, artisans, and agriculturists are found in full working order. The religion is a form of Buddhism, but the Brahmans assert their supremacy and are followed by the people. Heavy engines of war are brought up by the Musalmans, and their success is, among other causes, due to the possession of sea-power, with a base in the Persian Gulf. In fact, the expedition itself was rendered necessary because of piratical acts at the mouth of the Indus, which the Hindu princes had no power to suppress or control, and which preyed upon Muslim commerce with Ceylon.

The civil institutions established in Sindh were full of toleration and equity, and their story forms one of the brightest chapters in Muslim history. Mohammed Kásim's address to the Brahmans whom he appointed as revenue managers shows both political sagacity and something of those large views which afterwards blossomed out in Akbar. "Deal honestly," he says to the Brahmans, "between the people and the Sultan, and if distribution is required, make it with equity, and fix the revenue according to the ability to pay. Be in concord among yourselves, and oppose not each other, so that the country may not be distressed."\* This is not only the attitude of Mohammed Kásim himself, but also of Hajjáj, the Governor of Irák, whose agent he was in the expedition. Hajjaj in a letter of appreciation praises him "for your military conduct, and for the pains you have taken in protecting the people, ameliorating their condition, and managing the affairs of the government."†

Many mosques and schools were built after the occupation, and public functionaries appointed to administer the law and decide disputes. But there was a large measure of toleration granted to the Hindus. On their petition that the Hindu temple should be allowed to be repaired and their religious rites carried on as before, the following orders were passed:—

"They have been taken under our protection, and we cannot in any way stretch out our hands upon their lives and property. Permission is given to them to worship their gods. Nobody must be forbidden or prevented from following his own religion. They may live in their houses in whatever manner they like."‡

This was in the earliest days of Muslim dominion in India. The Arab power was firmly established in Sindh, but it soon became isolated from the rest of the Saracen Empire. It should be noted that this dynasty was the only one in India which was established directly under the guidance and initiative of the central Khilafat. Shortly afterwards rival Khilafats were established in the east and in the west, and many internecine wars occurred among the Muslims themselves. Their power continued to increase, but more under separate groups or units than under a central recognised authority. The attention of Muslim merchants, travellers, missionaries, geographers, historians, scientific men, and men of letters, continued to be directed towards the moral, intellectual, and material wealth of India. A merchant named Sulaiman embarked on the Persian Gulf and made several voyages to India and China. He wrote a valuable account of his travels, which is one of our early sources of information on India as seen by the Mohammedans. This was about the year 851 A.D. Accounts of this kind must have been fashionable about that time, for they were collated and edited by literary men who had access to libraries and were able to co-ordinate and comment upon the knowledge obtained at first hand by travellers. Such an editor was Abu Zaid, who met the famous geographer and historian Mas'udi in the literary city of Basra about 916, and edited the merchant Sulaiman's "Travels" in the light of the further information which he received from that great master of Arab style.

So far we have been looking at Muslim civilisation as represented by the Arabs, among whom there was a many-sided activity and the traditions of an intimate contact with the civilisations of Western Asia and the Mediterranean, in other words, the highest civilisations to which the world had yet attained. With the opening of the eleventh century comes a new racial force into Islam as represented in India. The expansion of the Turks, a comely, vigorous, blunt, and honest race, with primitive virtues and primitive failings, from their pasture grounds in Central Asia, had been proceeding with varying fortunes for centuries. The adoption, by the soft Khalifas of Baghdad, of a Turkish body-guard, gave them a status in the counsels of Islam. Their gradual reception into Muslim communities, as slaves, as freedmen, as soldiers, as leaders and rulers, prepared the way for that pre-emi-

\* *Chach-náma*, apud Elliot's History, I. 184.

† *Id.* I. 188.

‡ *Id.* I. 185-6.

nence which they subsequently established with unquestioned power after their reception bodily into the fold of Islam.

Mahmud of Ghazni was a product of the general Turkish advance which took the Muslim world by storm in the fifth century of the Hijra. Of Turkish descent on his father's side and Persian on his mother's, he had the inflexibility and the refinement which characterise the two races respectively, while the Afghan *milieu* in which he won his spurs and established his court left its traces in the narrow sectarianism and the love of greed of which he has been accused. Mahmud made periodical invasions of India, to the number of 13 or 14, between the years 1001 and 1030, with the triple object of obtaining military glory, compassing the destruction of idols, and carrying off the rich booty which he found in temples like those of Mathura and Somnath. His own city of Ghazni he adorned with a marble mosque to which he made gifts of lamps studded with gems, like those noble specimens of Saracenic art which form the wealth and glory of the Cairo Museum. A library and museum were also added to the attractions of the city, which drew to itself men of art and learning, historians and poets, from different parts of the Muslim world. Firdausi, the national poet of Persia, has made him immortal, not only for his generous love of poetry, but, in a contrary sense, for his ignoble avarice.

The justice he administered was stern and pure, and his ceaseless activity and conscientious discharge of his duties of kingship bring him into strong contrast with the inglorious and ease-loving potentates into whose weak hands had fallen the direction of the central authority in Islam. The chief fact that stands out in the internal politics of India is again the hopeless divisions of the people, and the implacable hatred with which the Raja of Kanauj helped in the destruction of the Raja of Delhi. An instructive commentary on Mahmud's victories is furnished by the patriotic verses of the Hindu bard Chand Bardai, whose intimate picture of the politics of the Delhi Raja's court supplies the much-needed corrective to the indiscriminate panegyrics of the professed historians of the reign of Mahmud the Iconoclast.

The invasion of Muhammad Kásim had been by sea; that of Mahmud and all subsequent Muslim invasions were through the passes of the north-west frontier of India. Afghanistan now becomes the stepping-stone

to India. The Arab invasions had been made by generals obeying the orders of the Governors of Irák, whose power was subject to the jurisdiction of the Khalifa himself. The local commanders had to refer many questions for decision to the stay-at-home authorities, who might or might not realise the difficulties of the local situation. A wrong decision might jeopardise thousands of lives, and undo the work of brilliant politicians and skilful soldiers, as, in fact, happened in the case of Muhammad Kásim himself. The invaders through Afghanistan came on their own account and were their own masters. They were, therefore, able to follow a strong and less vacillating policy, and they gradually settled in the country and built up the foundations of a fabric on which the modern superstructure of the Indian Empire rests.

It should be noted that subsequently to the Arab conquest India under Muslim rule never formed a part of the Muslim Khalifate, or any of the rival Muslim Khalifates, but was a separate and independent kingdom, with ecclesiastical pretensions of its own. Even Mahmud, who had strong ideas of loyalty to the ideal Muslim State, whose boundaries were conceived to be co-extensive with those of the Muslim Church, in practice departed widely from that conception. In his later career he sought and accomplished an expansion to the sea, and maintained a naval force, with which he policed the Indian Ocean, and claimed to guard the pilgrim routes and protect the pilgrims to Mecca. As an issue of independent coinage marks an assertion of independent sovereignty, so the claim to protect the pilgrims to the sacred cities of Arabia is tantamount to an assertion of independent sovereignty in a prince of Islam.

After the time of Mahmud of Ghazni there were many invasions and many Mohammedan dynasties in India. Their story forms a tedious record of wars, revolutions, rebellions, and family feuds. There were some strong or interesting figures standing out on the page of history, such as Sultana Razia Begam, who rode on horseback like a man and affected the style and title of Sultan; and pious kings, who never touched a pice from the public treasury, but maintained themselves, according to the Muslim ideal, by working at some private trade in the intervals of their State duties. But, apart from isolated instances, there were no men of broad views or great ideas who were able to leave their impress on

the history and institutions of mankind at large until we come to the spacious times of the Great Moghals.

This period is well known to the average English reader, and it will not be necessary to enlarge upon it. Before we glance at the personality of Akbar, the greatest of the Moghals, let us for a moment place before our eyes a picture of what these Moghals were, who were destined to play so large a part in the history of India. In fact, the name "Moghal" is a misnomer; they should rather be called Chaghtai Turks. Fortunately we have materials for judging what manner of men they were, not only from the memoirs left by Bábar, the founder of the dynasty in India, but the intimate revelations of their inner life and domestic relationships left us from the facile and lively pen of one of their princesses. Within the last few years Mrs. Beveridge has published a Persian transcript and an admirable English translation of "Humáyun-náma," a memoir by the princess Gul-Badan. She was a daughter of Bábar and an aunt of Akbar, and lived through three great reigns to witness scenes of triumph and disaster, of reconquest and organisation. Her memoir was composed in Akbar's reign to serve as part of the materials for the history of that monarch and his house. The manuscript which has been published breaks off three years before Akbar's accession, and, therefore, it fails in its original purpose of informing us as to the inner history of her illustrious nephew. But with the delicate touch of a feminine hand she sketches for us the internal lineaments of the early Moghals and their domestic history as it affected public events, and she does it with such fidelity and in such detail that it brings home to us the inner life of the people among whom Akbar was born and bred.

They were a rosy-cheeked race, who came over with Bábar to conquer Hindustan. They were fond of gardens, canals, fruits, and even wine. They were hardy, and loved all field sports, but they also cultivated music, poetry, and letters. Their women appeared unveiled before men, and, indeed, were always mixed up in the highest affairs of State. The greatest deference was paid to aunts and women of an elder generation. Not only did Gul-Badan write verses herself, but her niece, Salima Sultan Begam, was an accomplished poetess, and collected a library, to which apparently a copy of all books had to be contributed, which had any currency in court circles. Here we may see the germs of the Copyright Acts,

which in modern countries serve to keep their central libraries supplied with copies of all the publications that issue from the Press. The scenes in the domestic circle were genial and sometimes full of incident.

When Bábar wins his splendid triumph in India, he sends presents to all the ladies left behind in Kabul, who have doubtless been watching events with the same keen zest with which Clytaemnestra in the play watches for the return of Agamemnon, but with far purer and worthier motives. The presents are not sent in the mass, to be scrambled for or divided by chance or seniority. Bábar himself makes out a careful list, and selects an individual present for each, not forgetting a touch of humour in the present to a little child. With the greediness of a little fellow he is expecting a great many *Ashrafs* (gold coins), but he is told that only one has been sent for him and he is to receive it blindfolded. All the Begams assemble in a solemn session, the boy is brought into their midst with his eyes tied up, and a single gold Ashrafi is hung round his neck—but what a weight? It is a lump of 30lbs. and he can scarcely carry it. Amidst much laughter his eyes are opened, and he finds that he is the lucky recipient of a special Ashrafi—or rather medal—struck for him by the kindly thought of his genial relative. It contains more gold than the number of Ashrafis which he would have dared to ask for himself, if it had been left to his choice. But the humour of it all and the special distinction which marks him out show how Bábar's thoughts dwelt on him, as they did indeed on each individual of his household, man, woman, or child, in the midst of a busy campaign.\*

While I am on the subject of the Begam Gul-Badan, it may be of interest to give a few further instances of the part which Mohammedan women have played and are likely again to play in Mohammedan history. The instances are by no means as few as some people would probably suppose, who admit that Islam has great qualities, but say that it has not done justice to women. Some of the Prophet's most burning speeches relate to this very theme—justice and fair dealing to women. Indeed, some of the heroines of the early har-

\* This story is constructed out of a paragraph on p. 112 of the MS. as published by Mrs. Beveridge (*Humayun-nama*). I take Asas to be a little boy, perhaps a nephew or grand-nephew of Bábar. Mrs. Beveridge (p. 96, n. 4) takes Asas to be an old man and a servant. The words describing him are doubtful, but to me the story sounds more plausible told of a boy.

vest of Islam did not need to be protected from the men—quite the contrary. The battle of the Yermouk, which decided the fate of Syria in favour of the Arabs, was won by the superb courage of the women. Thrice had the warriors of Islam hurled themselves against the Roman phalanx, and thrice had a remnant of them retreated, bleeding and broken. But the Arab women behind the ranks ever urged them to charge, and to charge again. Abu Sofyán was struck on the face with a tent-pole by a woman. In these circumstances retreat was impossible; they went forward, broke the phalanx which had come to look upon itself as impregnable, and won the field.\* A similar story is told about the battle of Bokhara in the 90th year of the Hijra. Towards the end of the eighteenth century our own Nizam had a regiment of Amazons, the Zafar Paltan, which is said to have fought as well as the men.† I have already mentioned Sultana Razia Begam as a lady accomplished in affairs of State. An even more accomplished Princess was the great Nur Jahan Begam, the consort of Jahangir. While he was wasting his energies in drunken orgies, she was virtually ruler of the state, and her name appears on some of the coins. Indeed, Tavernier tells a pretty story (which, as Mr. Stanley Lane Poole points out,‡ was probably a popular legend) that she designed and issued the famous Zodiacal Mohurs of Jahangir. She was as just and liberal to the poor as she was peerless in her beauty and accomplishments. Many a noble lady's formula for attars and perfumes at the present day in India is traditionally ascribed to Nur Jahán. All suffering found ready help at her hands.§

Nor must we forget the literary ladies. We have seen what were the accomplishments of Gul-Badan and her niece. Zeb-un-nisa, the daughter of Aurangzeb, wrote a commentary on the Koran, and a volume of poems in Persian. To a later day belongs Gunna Begam, wife of Ghaziuddin, who founded the city of Ghaziuddin-nagar, which the railway authorities have re-christened Ghaziabad in the interests of brevity. She wrote Urdu verses, and her master in the art was no less a person than the poet Sauda. The story is that she was betrothed to the son of the Nawab Safdar Jang of Oudh, but eventually married the

Wazir of the Empire,\* and the seeds of enmity thus sown created a permanent cleavage in politics which lasted till the dissolution of the Moghal Empire. Nor must we omit to mention the late Begam of Bhopal, whose literary accomplishments were exceptionally remarkable in a line in which literary gifts are hereditary. At the present day a great deal of literary talent lies buried behind the pardah, as I know from personal knowledge; but alas!

Full many a gem of purest ray serene  
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear;  
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,  
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

In saying all this about Mohammedan women I am in no sense defending the abuses which have sapped the foundations of our social system and ended in the undoing not of women but of men. I have merely tried to point out the possibilities by means of concrete instances. The rising generation of Mohammedans are becoming more and more conscious of the abuses which shut out men from the most charming portion of mankind, those whose softening influence and gracious presence lend, as we find in Western lands, an added dignity and sweetness to life. Towards this ideal no family has worked with greater fidelity and success in India than that of the late Mr. Badruddin Tyabji, as all who were privileged to have an *entrée* to his family circle know and will remember with feelings akin to reverence.

The character of Akbar and the great forces for which he stands in Indian history are happily well known. Colonel Malleeson's monograph on him, and Lord Tennyson's poem, "Akbar's Dream," have brought home his ambitions and his ideals to Englishmen who do not ordinarily seek inspiration in Indian history. A man of indomitable will and cool courage in the face of danger and difficulties, he used his successes for the furtherance of justice and equality amongst all men. Great in war, he was greater in peace. Fond of riding, hunting, and swimming, he studied a serious purpose in life, and marked out his time so as to hold a just balance between his multifarious interests. Under the influence of Abul Fazl and Faizi, he approached the deepest problems of man's intellectual and spiritual destiny, seeking wisdom not in one school or form of thought, but wherever he could find it. With the assistance of Todar Mal in revenue administration, and of Raja Jai Singh of

\* Elliot : History I., 463.

† Irvine : Army of the Indian Moghuls, p.p 165-6.

‡ Coins of the Indian Moghals.

§ Elliot : History VI., 398-9.

\* Beale's Oriental Dictionary, *sub nomine*.

Jaipur, the soldier-astronomer who fought his battles in far Kabul with a loyalty that does credit to both King and vassal, Akbar built up a sound system of administration which has commended itself to the judgment of the Imperial race of Britain. He, no doubt, had precursors in men like Sher Shah Pathan; we all build on other people's foundations. But his merit consisted in breathing into the whole system the soul of his personality. He grasped the cardinal principle of statecraft that no country can flourish in stability or permanence in which race fights against race and religious animosities have sway, but that the happiness of princes and peoples alike depends on unity of will, co-operation in self-sacrifice, and firm, unbounded loyalty to and confidence in all political ideals.

Akbar was not only great as an emperor: but he was a man of supreme humour. This is a point in his character to which sufficient justice has not been done. If half the popular stories that are current about his combats of wit with Bir Bal and others are apocryphal, the fact that so many *bon mots* are referred to Akbar shows what reputation he had for wit and geniality—and no sour man can possibly acquire such a reputation. The fact that so many of these jokes are against him only makes his toleration and good humour all the more pre-eminent. We have time for retailing only one. Akbar and Bir Bal once contended as to which of them could first overcome the other in conversation. A time was fixed in advance when the contest was to commence. Akbar primed himself with many wise saws and modern instances, knowing that the Hindu's memory was good and equal to many resources. When the time arrived, Akbar began. He made many sallies, and left many openings to lure his opponent on. But Bir Bal smiled placidly all the time and never said a word. At length Akbar said, dealing (as he thought) the hardest and straightest blow of all: "What can you do when you have to deal with a fool all the time?" Quick but quiet was Bir Bal's reply: "In such a case," he said, "I should hold my tongue." Akbar ungrudgingly awarded him the prize of the contest.

The decline and fall of the Moghal Empire was due to many causes. Among Akbar's successors were strong and able men, but no one combined in himself the gift of that winning grace which made friends wherever he went, with that business ability, industry, and power of organisation, which could

turn abstract ideas into concrete institutions. The jealousies and intrigues among the nobles and satraps were a strong disintegrating force, which even Akbar could not always keep in subjection, but which broke out with destructive force when a strong policy was allied with intolerance and hatred of the Hindus. Above all, the mercenary army was allowed to fall into a state of indolence and disorganisation. The conquest had been achieved by strong men fighting for honour and glory: the empire was lost by weak men, who had no moral force of cohesion, though they never lacked personal courage. Mr. William Irvine has minutely investigated the military organisation of the Moghals, and this is his verdict: "The more I study the period the more I am convinced that military inefficiency was the principal, if not the sole, cause of the Empire's final collapse." \*

In dealing with the present position of the Indian Mohammedans it is curious to observe the alternating favour and disfavour in which they have been held at different times by English opinion. Warren Hastings was catholic; he and the immediately succeeding generation of Anglo-Indians found much that was attractive in the Mohammedans, but, above all, they remembered their history and treated it with respect. After the Mutiny the Muslims fell under a cloud, undeservedly, because their premier chief, the Nizam, remained loyal to the core, and his great minister, Sir Salar Jang, practically kept the peace of the Deccan and of Central India. The feeling of suspicion against Mohammedan loyalty grew and grew, until it found a visible peg to fasten itself upon in the Wahabi propaganda, and culminated in a series of State trials from 1864 to 1871. In 1871 a miserable assassin struck down the English Chief Justice of Bengal on the steps of his own court, and in the state of excited feeling which then prevailed, that despicable act was fastened upon the community which he had disgraced. Calm observers, however, even then raised their voice against the injustice of attaching the stigma of an individual's crime to a whole community, whose antecedents and principles alike made such a crime peculiarly abhorrent to their moral and religious feelings. The law is revered by Mohammedans more than power and dignity. The late Prof. E. H. Palmer wrote an Urdu letter, pointing out the injustice of connecting such

\* William Irvine: "Army of the Indian Moghuls," p. 296.

a crime with the feelings of the Mohammedan community, and the letter has been considered of sufficient importance to be published in Sir Walter Besant's "Life of Palmer." Sir William Hunter wrote a book with the significant title: "The Indian Mussulmans; are they Bound in Conscience to Rebel against the Queen?" Though he showed, on the whole, considerable sympathy with the Mohammedans, his views were so coloured with a misconception of the Mohammedan position that Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, of Aligarh, issued a rejoinder in the form of a review.

It is necessary, even at this day, to clear away the prejudices and misconceptions that attach to the Mohammedan position in connection with the Wahabi movement in India. The Indian apostle of the movement was Syed Ahmad of Bareilly, who proclaimed a Jihad on the North-West Frontier in 1830, and was slain in 1831. This Syed Ahmad is in no way to be confounded with Sir Syed Ahmed Khan of Aligarh: the two men were as the poles apart. The Wahabi movement, in its earliest phases in India, had two aspects, the religious and the political.

The religious aspect was the more important of the two, and has proved to be the more permanent. In this aspect Wahabiism aimed at going back to the pristine simplicity of Islam, and sweeping away the accretions (such as the reverence shown to *tazias*, graves of ancestors, and saints) which have grown up in India. It also questioned the authority of interpreters of the Sacred Book, and would substitute a plain and simple appeal to the sources of the Law rather than to the network of glosses and analogical systems founded upon it. Put in this abstract way, it could justly be called the extreme Evangelical School in Islam, and has many of the characteristics of evangelical schools and revivals elsewhere. The spirit in which it was preached was that of hostility and an uncompromising attack on the existing order of things, and, therefore, the majority of Indian Mohammedans have always rejected it not only with scorn, but with something of the bitter rancour which is always called forth in religious controversies. In orthodox circles the name "Wahabi" became a term of abuse of even a deeper dye than "atheist" or "unbeliever."

The Wahabis as a religious sect in India are now of little importance, but their religious fervour has stirred the more orthodox schools to set their own houses in order. A number of

new and liberal movements in Muslim theology have sprung up, of which as yet we are only seeing the early beginnings.

The political aspect of Wahabiism never appealed to even an appreciable section of the Indian Mohammedans. It arose to a considerable extent from a misappreciation of the lessons to be learned from the twelve centuries of Mohammedan history, which had already witnessed the rise and fall of many ideas. These ideas had failed, when translated into facts, to realise the ideal brotherhood of mankind. The further century which has since elapsed has added a more conclusive chapter of warnings against the thoughtless admission of the foul and tainted exhalations of rough-and-tumble politics to what should be the pure and serene atmosphere of religious peace and freedom. The original relation of Church and State at the birth of Islam was so close that the term Erastian has been applied to the Muslim idea of a Church; it would be more correct to say that the Muslim conception of a State was theocratic. This conception, unredeemed by the conditions which originally gave it reality, colours the schemes of all visionaries who do not learn wisdom from the lessons of history. The Khalifa, abstract and elective, is the counterpart of the Stoics' perfect man. What a cruel mockery then to dispute, on the religious plane, about the merits of a concrete embodiment which may be a negation of all the virtues postulated! Nor is the spectacle edifying when we see a man claiming to guide events which he does not understand, and hurling anathemas at the heads of other men of similar pretensions. It may be said that the collective conscience of Islam, though it has never formulated the doctrine in plain terms, has come to recognise that it tends to nobler spirituality in religion and greater strength in politics to conceive of the Mujtahid of the age, or several Mujtahids—to adopt a term which Akbar sought to apply to himself—as a personality distinct from the king or leader who uses judicial force for the suppression of anti-social force. This lesson has been specially, if unconsciously, brought home to the Indian Muslims. Even the small following which adopted the religious views of Wahabiism has practically repudiated its political corollaries. The sect has already been split into two. One portion openly and professedly reject the dangerous doctrines of Jihad, and the other hedge them round with so many qualifications that for practical purposes they

may be considered now to hold the same political views as the rest of their co-religionists in India. These sects are principally found in Bengal, and the last census report of the province gives an excellent account of the practical trend of their doctrines. The orthodox schools (Sunni and Shiah) have always opposed the ultra-dogmatic tenets of Jihad, by means of numerous Fatwas and authoritative opinions.

I have lingered so long over this matter in order to show that there is nothing either in the religion or the history of the Indian Musalmans to prevent them from taking an honourable place as citizens in a free and progressive Empire. As to their relations with the British Government, they have tended more and more, within recent times, towards cordiality. His Highness the Nizam has always been a faithful ally of the British power, but never have his relations with that power been more cordial than they are now. The recent abolition of quarantine at Bombay for the pilgrimage to Mecca has brought solace to many a devout Muslim who had never heard and who never cared about the controversies raging in a certain portion of North-Eastern India. The statesmanlike reply of the Earl of Minto to the Simla deputation in October, and the speeches of Sir Arthur Lawley, have further helped forward the *rapprochement*. The way seems now clear for a strong united patriotic party, based not on sectarianism or religious differences, but on a steadfast and manly recognition of all the best interests of India.

For it must be insisted upon that the Muslim position is not grounded upon a blind and implacable hatred of the Hindus, or of any other class of His Majesty's subjects. A foundation of hatred or hostility can never support an edifice of national life, and would be subject to sudden earthquakes when the forces of disorder are let loose. But moral courage, a happy combination of independence and discipline, a directness of aims, and, above all, truth, integrity, and loyalty, are the factors which help forward orderly and sustained progress.

The Muslim leaders have shown these qualities in the past, and will show them again when necessary. Of course, I must be understood to claim no monopoly for them in these matters to the exclusion of other Indians, but I am focussing my attention at the present moment on the community whose fortunes we are interested in to-day. The noble monument of the genius of Sir Syed Ahmed is seen in the living college at Aligarh

to-day, and Mr. Badruddin Tyabji has left an inspiring example in his efforts for women's education and emancipation, and in the sturdy good sense and independence with which he always approached any questions which he handled. It would not, perhaps, be becoming to attempt an appreciation of living leaders; but we are happy in possessing not a few — authors, jurists, lawyers, poets, professors, religious dignitaries, and land-holders — of whom any community may well be proud.

The future of the Muslims rests entirely in their own hands. They number 62½ millions in India, against a total of 250 millions in the world, as estimated by a recent authority. It is true that they are a minority among the 294 millions of the people of India; but they are increasing faster than the Hindus, and if they have any consciousness of moral worth, their influence is, or might be, greater than can be measured by mere numbers. Except in Kashmir and Eastern Bengal, where they form the rural cultivators, and the poorer mass of the people, their centres of population are usually in the towns, and their occupations are usually those above what are called the *Razâil pesha*. Their skilled artisans are famous and have been famous for ages. In the learned professions they occupy a respectable position, though they ought to be better represented than they are. In administrative positions in which manliness, open-air work, and knowledge of men are the chief requirements, they excel. Their literature is both rich and vigorous, and the tinge of melancholy which seems to have rendered turbid its lucid stream will disappear with the advent of larger hopes and fresh streams of thought. It is less sectarian perhaps than the literature of any other people in India. Was it not Malik Muhammed of Jâyas (*circa* 1540) who wrote the *Padmâvat* in excellent Eastern Hindi and prepared the way for that deservedly popular Hindu classic, the *Ramayan* of Tulsi Das?

What they chiefly require is organisation. Such splendid material should not be wasted for lack of co-operative effort. The different Anjumans which they already possess are excellent institutions, but the Muslims require a healthy organisation of their Church on a purely religious, though broad and non-sectarian, basis. Their social system requires organisation on progressive lines, with more of the valuable benefits of women's co-operation. I have an idea that the women in Turkey, Syria, Egypt, and Algeria (especially the last)

are far more advanced than the Muslim women in India, and I am told by a Persian friend—a great admirer of Qurrat-ul-Ain—that the women of his nation are the most advanced of any in Islam. Then, again, our charities and *wakfs* require a thorough examination and complete reorganisation, so that our modern ideas may be brought to bear, as far as is consistent with the donors' wishes, on their administration. We should make these benefactions subserve national progress instead of chartered indolence. Could not Mr. Ameer Ali give us a detailed and reasoned exposition of the subject, dealing not only with abstract generalities, but with concrete and specific instances?

Above all we want a careful and thorough review of our educational position, not only as it touches the men but also as it affects the women. The late Syed Mahmūd's book on the subject contains excellent material, though it requires to be digested, brought up to date, and enlarged in scope. The review by itself would be useless if it leads to no practical results. In higher education the results achieved by the Aligarh College are striking: the proportion of Muslims in the United Provinces under collegiate education is a good deal higher as compared with the Muslim population of the province than the proportion of Hindus receiving higher education to the total Hindu population in the province. This fact I mention not for self-congratulation, but in order to draw attention to the other side of the picture in regard to primary and secondary education, and particularly in regard to the education of girls. A system in which the primary and secondary education is not put on a sound and popular basis is liable to become top-heavy. In the Punjab, the Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam has done very good work in the direction of primary and secondary education, and has always kept in touch with the masses of the people. Their example is to be commended to the Muslim community of the whole of India.

Self-help is a principle which cannot be too much emphasised and urged upon the attention of the Indian Muslims. If they rely upon themselves, they are more likely to obtain the encouragement and practical assistance of the Government than if they constantly harped on abstract principles, or built futile hopes on the treacherous sands of preferential treatment. I have no hesitation in saying that such treatment would be demoralising to themselves, and quite out of the

question as the sole crutch to rely upon in this twentieth century. Frank, sturdy, and true was the advice given by the Governor of Madras (Sir Arthur Lawley) the other day, to a deputation that waited upon him:—

"You tell me," he said, "that a change has come over the spirit of your dreams, that there is a change in your aims and aspirations, that you put before yourselves the goal of national progress. You ask my aid in helping you to attain that goal. I am afraid the days of magic are over. Even a Governor does not possess any mystical power whereby he can expedite to any appreciable degree the advance of national progress; but when you rally your forces to the campaign against prejudice and ignorance, when you make Progress your battle-cry, then, indeed, I am ready to enter into an alliance with you, defensive and offensive."

If I were asked to make a banner for this peaceful campaign of progress, I should inscribe on it the following mottoes: Staunch loyalty to our Sovereign; Patriotism for our country; Friendliness to all our neighbours; and, the sum and substance of them all, Absolute truth to ourselves.

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#### NOTE ABOUT THE SLIDES SHOWN.

Portraits of celebrities, including Their Highnesses the Nizam, the Aga Khan, the late Begam of Bhopal, Miss Fyzee, the late Justice Badruddin Tyabji, the late Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, Maulāna Hāli, the poet, and the Emperor Akbar, from a portrait in Valentyn's "Lives of the Great Moghals" (in Dutch), Amsterdam, 1726.

Buildings in Fatehpur Sikri, Sikandra, Delhi, and Agra, to illustrate Moghal and earlier Mohammedan architecture and decorative arts.

Jahangir's zodiacal coinage, to illustrate the legends that gathered round Nur Jahan.

Badshahi Sarai, in Nur Mahal Town, District Jalandhar, built by order of the famous Moghal Queen—to illustrate the manners of the period.

Mausolea of Hyder Ali and Tippu Sultan, and Jami Masjid built by Tippu—to illustrate late Mohammedan architecture in the South.

Bijapur Jami Masjid—to illustrate the grand and original style of architecture, showing Byzantine influences, developed in the South under the dynasty of Yusuf Adil Shah, who was a son of the great Murad or Amurath, Sultan of Constantinople.

The great Bijapur gun, known as Malik-i-Maidan—to illustrate the design and finish which the Mohammedans of the sixteenth century were able to carry out in the art of casting metals. Diameter at breech, 4 ft. 10 in. Col. Meadows Taylor, in 1866, described it as the largest piece of ordnance in the world. Cast by a Turk, Muhammad bin Hasan Rumi, in 1548.

Mosque at Champanir, panel of Arabesque in

ceiling—illustrating early Mohammedan art in the old capital of Gujerat.

Ahmedabad architecture, including a window of palm tracery from the Bhadr—illustrating the limits of the natural and the conventional in decorative design. *Cf.* Mandelslo's description (1662) of two rows of palm trees and tamarinds in this very place.

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### DISCUSSION.

The CHAIRMAN thought the audience had listened with pleasure and interest to the eloquent and instructive address which Mr. Yusuf-Ali had given. He hoped the author would not think it a mean compliment if he said that he had been much struck with the extreme facility and eloquence he displayed in a language which was not his own. If it was borne in mind how few Englishmen there were who had a thorough command of any foreign language, he thought it would be recognised that it was no mean achievement for an Indian to speak and write English as Mr. Yusuf-Ali did. Although the author had not gone any too far into the past history of the Mohammedans, he regretted that the paper was not extended in order that those present might have heard something further about the present and the future. That was the criticism he desired to make—that, animated as everybody was by the modern spirit of hurry, progress, and looking ahead, the present and the future of Mohammedanism in India in a treatise of greater extent would have appealed to them immensely. He thought in dwelling longer on the past than on the present and the future, the author was displaying a very common characteristic of his co-religionists. He would not say that it was a failing, but there was no doubt that the Muslim of India was too fond of looking back to the past. He needed to look more ahead, a fact which he thought the author fully recognised; but he (the Chairman) wished for the sake of those who read the paper afterwards that that point had been more emphasised in the paper. Next, he thought that anyone who read the paper in the future would carry away an undue impression of the ability and the intellectual powers of Mohammedans as a whole in India. No one was more ready to admit than he was the existence of brilliant exceptions in the persons of able Mohammedans in all classes of life, but it would be a wrong impression if anyone thought that the proportion of Mohammedans who were progressive, intellectual, and distinguished was a large one compared with the proportion of other communities. That was fully admitted by the leaders of Mohammedan reform in India. He remembered that Mr. Justice Tyabji, who presided at the Educational Conference in Bombay in 1903, made a very brilliant, candid and courageous address laying great emphasis on that point. He said that "in every department of life, whether it be in the public service or in the liberal professions, the numbers of Mohammedans who

were distinguished civil servants, doctors, engineers, or lawyers, was a mere handful compared to the numbers of those of other communities." He went on to say that the Government had been impartial and fair, and that the backwardness of Mohammedans, which he so fully admitted, was due to their religious and literary prejudices, and to the absence of female education. The author had mentioned so many interesting points connected with the capable Mohammedan ladies, of whom he was most rightly and justly proud, that he thought the audience would go away with the impression that the successors of the Begams, of whom he had told so many stories, the Mohammedan ladies of the present day in India, were a great deal more cultured and capable than they really were. There was a brilliant exception to which the author referred in the person of H.H. the Begam of Bhopal; but he did not think there were many poets, writers, or critics of Holy Writ among Mohammedan ladies who could be at all considered as belonging to the first rank. At the Conference to which he had referred, H.H. the Aga Khan made some remarks, which were also characterised by frankness and courage, and which were of so much importance in view of what had for some time past been the attitude of Mohammedans in India that he had looked them up and made a note of them. His Highness said:—"Providence has given us a Government that guarantees justice, intellectual and religious liberty, personal freedom—a Government that gives a clear field and no favour, that constantly by its own acts reminds us that fitness is the only test, and that for the fit there are no obstacles." That was the attitude of the men of light and leading among Mohammedans in India, and that was the attitude of the author of the paper. Unlike the great majority of his co-religionists, Mr. Yusuf-Ali made no complaint that the Government had been partial, and he had not asked for preferential treatment. Indeed, one of the sentences in the paper which pleased him most was the allusion to the "treacherous sands of preferential treatment." One of the most encouraging things at the present time was that the leading Mohammedans, under the guidance of enlightened and brilliant men of strong character, like the two whose words he had just quoted, were giving up the idea that preferential treatment in the public service would prove their salvation, or be of advantage to them. It was perfectly obvious that a few more billets in the Government service could not possibly be of any appreciable advantage to so vast a community as 62 million people, but yet the humbler Mohammedans pathetically pinned their faith on that hope. It was a comfort that that idea was slowly being given up, and making way for more sensible views of the situation, and to a conviction that in self-help and self-reliance lay the hope for Mohammedanism in the future. During the past five years he had had a good deal to do with Mohammedans. They had come to him with petitions and addresses to which

he had to reply, and the burden of them all was "Give us more posts in the Government Service." Those representations were not drafted or instigated by the leading men. With regard to these he desired to say, without any intention of paying a compliment to the author, that the Indian Mohammedans had always had the greatest attraction for him. That attraction was due, not only to their manliness, to their courtly manners, to a sense that they inherited a deep-seated love of learning of an Oriental character, but also to the certainty he entertained of their feelings of loyalty and patriotism. The author concluded his address by saying:—"If I were asked to make a banner for this peaceful campaign of progress, I should inscribe on it the following mottoes:—"Staunch loyalty to our Sovereign; patriotism for our country; friendliness to all our neighbours; and, the sum and substance of them all, absolute truth to ourselves." He thought the Mohammedans of India were true to everyone of those mottoes except the last—they lacked absolute truth to themselves. That could only come from and through themselves; the Government could not help them with regard to that. He sympathised very much with the author when he dwelt on the past of Mohammedanism, because he thought the past was the subject of which Mohammedans had great cause to be proud. There was not only the fact that the Moghals laid the foundations of that British dominion in India of which we are all so proud, that they had laid to a great extent the foundations of that system which England is now carrying on, but also that they had a wonderful history of civilisation and enlightenment to which they could well look back. It was not often remembered by this country that the Mohammedans were the pioneers of civilisation in Europe. All the first great truths regarding mathematics, astronomy, and medicine came from the Arabs who were of the faith of Islam. In the old days the zeal for learning was so great that it was related of one Khalif of Baghdad that he prepared to make war on the Roman Emperor for no other reason than that of compelling him to send to Baghdad a famous mathematician of his court. One could trace back to all that natural and just pride of their ancient learning, power, and enlightenment, the reason for one of the present failings of Mohammedans—they had clung to the old system of education. At the commencement of the British rule they were too prone to neglect Western education, and thus allowed the Hindus to get a start of them in the race. To put the matter quite plainly, in the baldest language, the young Mohammedan was taught the Koran in the school in the old-fashioned way, *i.e.*, he was taught to commit the Koran to memory for several years to the exclusion of his secular education, and, therefore, he was several years behind the young Hindu boy. The same process was going on with the individual as had gone on between the two races. He believed it was a fact, because it had been stated by the great Mohammedan

leaders in India, that Islam was not hostile to Eastern or Western education. The Prophet himself said, "seek knowledge even if it were in China." In the ancient Khaliphates of Baghdad and Spain, to which he had just referred, the works of the Greek and Roman philosophers were read side by side with the Koran, and the faith of Islam was not undermined or impaired in any way. The signs of the times, as the author said, were extremely hopeful. The great work of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, which could not be over-estimated, was beginning to be appreciated. The Mohammedan educational conference was slowly but surely pursuing its propaganda, and recently a new development had been seen in the deputation to the Viceroy of the Mohammedan leaders of the whole of India. It was a very remarkable demonstration, from which the attitude of Mohammedans towards British rule and towards the question of their own progress was thoroughly patent. He thought it was a most encouraging episode, and one full of hope for the maintenance of a bond of cordiality between the British race and Mohammedans in India, and for the future of Mohammedans themselves. The author had given several charming anecdotes, and he personally would like to emulate his example by giving one also. Mr. Yusuf-Ali had referred at some length to the Wahabis, who might be roughly described as the Puritans and Protestants of Islam. In a sense they represented both those classes, and they were also Unitarians in so far as they were against polytheism. They objected to all gaiety and frivolity, just as Puritans did in old days. One thing they condemned most particularly was smoking; and *apropos* of that he found in Palgrave's book on Arabia a rather amusing anecdote. Palgrave narrated "that one Abd-ul Karim said to him, 'The first of the great sins is giving Divine honours to a creature.' 'Of course,' I replied, 'the enormity of such a thing is beyond all doubt. But if this be the first, there must be a second; but what is it?' 'Drinking the shameful' (the Arabic idiom for smoking tobacco) was the unhesitating answer. 'And murder and adultery and false witness?' I suggested. 'God is merciful and forgiving,' rejoined my friend; that is, these are little sins.'"

Sir WILLIAM LEE-WARNER, K.C.S.I., desired to add the special thanks of the Indian Committee to Mr. Yusuf-Ali for the successful lead he had given in a new departure. In previous years we had heard about Indian arts, finances, commerce, resources, and famines. The Indian Section was now beginning a course upon the people of India, and he hoped that the account of each of the main races would be given by one of that race. The author had not only given an interesting account of his own co-religionists; he had also contrived to show his devotion to his own people without a single word which could possibly offend any one of the other races. He (the speaker) professed himself a disciple of the Swadeshi movement, and the more he thought about the various qualities

of the very different races and religions of India the more he felt what a vast resource India possessed in the sum total of their different qualities if only they could be turned to account for the good of their common country. How to utilise these resources of India's manhood for the common good, employing Christians, Hindus, Mohammedans, Parsis, Buddhists and others in the public service, was the great problem, and it could only be solved by knowledge and appreciation of the qualifications of each race. The Mohammedans had turned out great men in the past and there was no reason why they should not do so in the future. Perhaps the Government would be wise in altering some of its methods of selection, perhaps public competition was not the best means of recruitment. But certain it was that we must not let the national resources of India run to waste. We must enlist the best of all races in due proportion in the common work of the public service of that great Empire. He hoped that the paper which had been read and those which were to follow would suggest how this end could be attained.

Mr. AMEER ALI, C.I.E., said the subject of the paper was of especial interest to him, as he had traversed a good deal of the same ground, and it was interesting to notice how the salient features of the history of the Mohammedans of India struck the younger generations of his co-religionists. He thought the reader of the paper had rather lightly touched on the work of the Mohammedans in India. It was usually supposed that the Mohammedans came as conquerors, and long after their settlement introduced political institutions which had been of value to their successors in the work of Government, but the amount of help they had given to the development of civilisation in that country was not recognised. If the history of Mohammedan India was more carefully studied, it would be found that the Mohammedan savants, scholars, poets, and *littérateurs*, who came from the West to India, furthered to the utmost the civilisation of that country, and added to the civilisation of India which had come down from ancient times. He joined in the Chairman's friendly criticism of the paper that it dwelt too much on the past. Personally he had hoped to hear a good deal about the present condition and future prospects of the Mohammedans in India. He thought it was necessary to make a few observations on the question of the *wakf* institutions to which the author had referred. He had devoted some 400 pages of his work on Mohammedan law to the elucidation of the law of *wakfs*. Up to that time he was under the impression that it was English judges only who did not quite appreciate the abstract side of this branch of the Mussulman law, but he was sorry to find the learned reader of the paper felt a similar difficulty. If Mr. Yusuf-Ali would be good enough to explain to him the exact nature of his difficulty he should be very happy to offer such explanation as he could. In 1885 the Central National Mo-

hammedan Association of Calcutta, of which at the time he was secretary, represented to the Government of India that the Mohammedan *wakfs* all over the country, which included provisions for the advancement of education, were being wasted and misapplied. The Government of India moved the Government of Bengal to appoint a Commission for the purpose of investigating the matter. Three members belonging to the progressive section of the Mohammedan community, and three others from a different section, were appointed on the Commission, the Advocate-General of Bengal being the chairman. Unfortunately, the views expressed by the Commission were so divergent that the Government of India felt it difficult to grapple with the matter and dropped it, so that the endowments had gone on as usual, and nothing had been done. It was not the fault of the Mohammedan community; it was the fault, if he might say so with all deference, of the Government, which thought itself so bound to defer to what it considered orthodox views that nothing had been done for the protection of Mohammedan *wakfs*, or for their utilisation for the promotion of education. With all respect, he desired to say that the Mohammedans of India did not seek preferential treatment; they wanted fair and equitable treatment. They felt that within the last few years there had been such a change in the policy of public affairs that they did not get the treatment to which they were entitled.

Mr. THEODORE MORISON (late Principal of the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh) said the paper had suggested to him that, in considering Mohammedan history, the author had made it quite clear that Mohammedans had had a tradition of culture which was entirely independent and their own. Even during the time that they had lived in India, although no doubt they had been influenced by their surroundings, that intellectual tradition of culture had been independent. He did not wish to enter upon the very debatable and thorny question of whether the Mohammedans might be considered a nationality of their own in India, but the fact that they had an intellectual tradition constituted a strong argument for what the most enlightened Mohammedans of the present day were asking for, namely, a University of their own. He was aware that was not the opinion of their late University Commission, but it was his own view; in this he was entirely in sympathy with the Mohammedan community. He presumed the author had not referred to that question because it was a debatable one. Mohammedans had in their own language words which would have been extremely useful in the educational broils in which England was now engaged. They had two distinct words for intellectual training and the discipline of character. There was, unfortunately, no word in English to distinguish intellectual instruction from the discipline of character except those rather clumsy and lengthy words. The Mohammedans expressed the distinction by simply using two

words: *ta'lim*, to imply intellectual instruction, and *tarbiyat*, to mean discipline of character—the conception being that the training of character was an integral part of education and could not be divorced from it. There was a purely secular education in India, and therefore the training of character took no part in it, because it was felt that, if conduct was influenced, the dangerous ground of religion was entrenched upon. Mohammedans accordingly contended that they should be allowed to carry on the intellectual tradition they had hitherto possessed, and give to their children an education which would not only be educational but include the training of character. One of the present ideals of the Mohammedans was, as he had said, that they should be allowed to have a university of their own, which, of course, was not intended to absorb the whole of the educational institutes of the country at which Mohammedans were at present educated. The Mohammedan leaders, at least, recognised that a university such as they contemplated could only be for a very small number. The great majority of Mohammedans would have to attend local colleges, what might be called “bread and butter” colleges, which students attended simply for the sake of the advantages the training conferred upon them for their work in after life. He knew that view of education had been a good deal sneered at recently in India. To put it frankly, the great majority of people who went to universities, either in England or in Germany, did so because it gave them greater chances and advantages in the struggle for existence; but what the Mohammedan leaders demanded, with, he thought, absolute truth, was that they should have in their community a small number of highly educated men, of scholars, who would increase the reach of Mohammedan thought and diffuse high ideals throughout their community. It was their belief that they might create in one place a sort of intellectual capital for Islam in India, and that was their ideal in wishing for a Mohammedan university.

Sir RAYMOND WEST, K.C.I.E., after joining in the chorus of thanks which had been expressed to the author for his excellent paper, said that matters of Mohammedan history admitted, like the history of other nations and communities, of various views. For instance, the views held in England with regard to English history varied from those entertained on it in France or Germany. He, therefore, thought it was no discourtesy to the paper, the admirable spirit of which he thoroughly recognised, to say it was quite possible to have somewhat different views on some portions of Mohammedan history from those the author had put forth. He invited his hearers to look into the subject for themselves. There was a great deal in Mohammedan history which was worthy of admiration and respect. He was quite certain that the want of respect for Mohammedan feeling, traditions and men, of which there was at least a veiled complaint in the paper, did not really exist; it

was merely a thing conjured up by the over-sensitive imagination of the members of the Mohammedan community. He had had a good deal to do with Mohammedans in his time, both in India and Egypt; and no men in the world with whom he had had to deal had appealed to him more in point of manners and bearing than the Mohammedans with whom he had been brought in contact. They were grave, courteous, modest, and manly in their bearing, and in every way calculated to win the respect and admiration of Englishmen. He believed that, if the English gentlemen who had rendered service to the Government in India were consulted, it would be found that no people stood higher in their estimation, or commanded their respect more than the Mohammedan people; and he trusted that if the author had any lurking suspicion that there was still a want of respect on the part of English people for the traditions of his community, he would put it away from him at once and for ever. The history of the past, however, was of less importance than the position of Mohammedans in the present. He thought the position of Mohammedans in India at present, did present certain difficulties, but they were being fairly faced by the Government; and he had no doubt that a remedy would be found by co-operation between the Government and the most intelligent leaders of the Mohammedan community, such as those who had lately been expressing their views, and also by the influence of such men as the author himself. Mr. Yusuf-Ali had spoken of the necessity of organisation. He thought organisation was even less necessary amongst the Mohammedan community than the formation of a new set of theories and ideals. A great deal of wealth, social and intellectual, might be drawn from their ancient literature, which would be of infinite advantage, as those were the stores from which they ought to draw the principles which were most calculated to benefit them in the future because they were of natural growth. Things which were admittedly exotic seldom took root so thoroughly as those drawn from the stores of one's own history and literature. For instance, Mohammedan law gained no place amongst the Mohammedan community until men of genius contrived to draw out from the then existing sacred literature of the Mohammedans the basis for a structure of Mohammedan law, which had governed the people and been the most potent means of swaying their minds from that period down to the present. He, therefore, thought the author, and other members of the Mohammedan community, should form amongst themselves a set of ideals and theories for the advancement of their people adapted to present needs, but drawn from the riches of their own literature, feeling certain that truth based on those eternal foundations would work itself out to the ultimate benefit of their community.

Dr. SEID ABDUL MAJID agreed with the author that there was a want of organisation among Moham-

medans for placing their grievances and demands before the Government, not that he advocated any proceedings which would detract from the loyalty which Mohammedans observed towards the Government, or be unfriendly to other communities. A centralised Government, such as the Government of India, should study the wants of the people; but, unfortunately, in India the head of the Government was changed every five years, so that just when the Viceroy was beginning to appreciate the wants of the people, and follow out a proper policy, he was recalled. He disagreed with the Chairman's view that Mohammedans were antiquated. The smallness of the number in the Government service was due to the want of interest in the Mohammedans on the part of the Government officials, and not to their want of ability, as had been pointed out in the Address presented to the Viceroy, at Simla, on October 1st. An Address was presented to the Chairman, by the Mohammedans, when he was leaving Madras, and, in reply, his lordship said that the Mohammedans were lacking in pushfulness; but personally he maintained it was the duty of the Government to push them forward. Further, as Mr. Morison had pointed out, Mohammedans required a University which would mould the character of their young men, their ethical needs being entirely different from those of the other races of India. Although the Government, so far, had not supported their appeal, he trusted it would be again considered in the friendliest manner.

On the motion of the CHAIRMAN, a hearty vote of thanks was accorded to Mr. Yusuf-Ali for his exceedingly interesting paper.

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Mr. J. D. ANDERSON, late I.C.S., writes:—It seems to me that Mr. Yusuf-Ali's admirable paper provides matter for thought to all who are interested in India. It brings out, incidentally, how different are our problems from those of other Mohammedan countries. Of the Turkish Empire I will not venture to speak. In a purely Mussulman country the regeneration of the administration is in the hands of the leaders of the people, and European example and advice is probably not of much use. In Tunisia and Algeria the problem is chiefly economical. These countries are being overrun with hundreds of thousands of Christian immigrants from Sicily, Malta, and the Balearic Isles, in search of land to cultivate and of manual labour. The Mohammedans of French Africa are pressing their Government to protect them against the industrial competition of men who are not only aliens but not even French subjects. In Egypt, again, is a different problem. I suppose such men as Mustapha Kamel Pasha, and such newspapers as *El Lewa*, do not aim at making Cairo another such place as Stamboul. I suppose they desire an independent but Europeanised Egypt.

In India, as Mr. Yusuf-Ali shows, the problem is quite different again. There the Mussalmans are not only in a minority, but, in many provinces, are very scattered. There was a time when it seemed as if they were content to dwell as foreigners in India, since they could not have their old position of undisputed rulers of the country; but, as the paper shows, Islam is waking up to the fact that it can claim, if not the old monopoly of rule, yet the share in the administration which is due, not merely to its numbers, but to the energy, the culture, the independence and the honest purpose of enlightened Mussulmans. Now, one of the peculiarities (as has often been noticed) of Hinduism is that, though it is an exclusive religion and makes no direct converts, it is curiously tolerant. The propagandist religions "of the Book" have always had some difficulty in being tolerant, in "rendering to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's." It was largely Indian dominion that taught Englishmen the lesson that administration in a country where there are many religions must necessarily be (in the modern phrase) "undenominational," and that the government of such a country must be purely secular. If the Mohammedans of India can learn this lesson, they have a great future before them, and especially those who, like the author, possess a high official position. The Mussulman in India has to assert his rights as a British subject, has to show, as he can easily show, that to be a Mohammedan by creed is not, as it has sometimes been, a disadvantage but an advantage. History has shown us that Mussulmans can be as tolerant as Akbar himself, as tolerant as the best Anglo-Indian administrators have always been. They will have to assert themselves in secular matters, and hold their own with their Hindu fellow-citizens. But they will have to do this in a spirit of courtesy and tolerance, and not of aggressive superiority or exclusiveness. They must demand a fair field for their energies, commercial, social and political, and must show that the races who once ruled India can hold their own in the modern struggle for life. To do this, they must hold to and assert the doctrine that administration in a mixed country like India must be purely secular, and that religious tests of all sorts must be excluded from public business. They must no longer stand aloof from politics and government, and must claim to be consulted, not as Mussulmans, but as natives of India, whose culture, intelligence, and sincerity of purpose give them a peculiar claim to be consulted. And if all this is true of the Indian Mussulmans, it is equally true of the Indian Christians, many of whom are in a worse state than any of the followers of Islam. They have to show that it is no more a disadvantage, in the social and political sphere, to be a Christian than to be a Hindu or a Parsi, and to show this, not by asserting the superiority of Christians as such, but by proving that the profession of Christianity is not incompatible with civic virtues, business habits and political wisdom. I think all this is more or less

implied in the admirable and suggestive paper, the optimistic spirit of which renders it delightful reading to all who believe that the present agitations in India will result in a better understanding between all classes of the King-Emperor's loyal subjects in a country where loyalty is traditional.

Mr. YUSUF-ALI writes :—

As there was no time at the meeting to reply to the points raised in the discussion, I append the following supplementary remarks :—

I am under a deep obligation to the distinguished speakers who have joined in the discussion, and to the friendly audience which has given so kind a reception to the subject of the paper. My object was to bring forward a few facts about Indian Mohammedans in as interesting a manner as possible, and to avoid all controversial topics. Had I been speaking to an audience consisting chiefly of Indian Muslims, I should no doubt have felt it my duty to adopt a different mode of treatment. I should then have assumed much of the past, and insisted more on the present and the future of the internal affairs of the people. But in introducing the subject to a London audience, many of whom are probably unfamiliar with it, it seemed to me best to lay before them a few of the undoubted facts of history, facts which continue to influence and shape our ideas at the present day, and will have a great deal to do with the unfolding of our future. It is on the same principle that when we make a new acquaintance, we want to know all that he has done in the realm of action or thought, for that is the surest key to his character, and will enable us to calculate what he is likely to do in a given set of circumstances. At the same time, I am at one with the noble Chairman in his advice to the Indian Mohammedans to look ahead rather than rest on their oars, and I welcome his words, and those of Mr. Ameer Ali, as likely to carry much weight and authority with the Indian Muslims.

To Sir William Lee-Warner I owe a debt of gratitude in many ways—not the least for the interesting announcement which he has made about the new departure initiated by the Indian Section of the Society of Arts, over which he so worthily presides. A most encouraging sign of the times is the interest now taken in Indian affairs in the capital of the British Empire. It is possible to hear more papers by the highest authorities on Indian topics in London during the season, than even in Calcutta or Bombay.

On the subject of *wakfs*, the limitations of space and time have not permitted more than the briefest allusion in the paper. I had hoped for a more extended review of that difficult question from Mr. Ameer Ali, who can speak with acknowledged authority. He has not only written about it and taken the action which he alluded to in connection with the Central Mohammedan Association of Calcutta. His long judicial experience, and his share in the practical administration of the Mohsin

Fund, would enable him to handle the subject with a mastery of detail which must necessarily be wanting in mere abstract discussions. What I meant to suggest in the paper was that specific instances of Muslim *wakfs* in India should be taken, their history carefully traced, their original conditions examined, their present administration inquired into, and the influence of legal decisions favourably or adversely to the claims of individuals and communities impartially estimated. Each *wakf* should be treated on its own merits and examined in the minutest detail, and the conclusions should be based, not upon opinions, but upon hard, solid facts, which can be verified by the opponents of any measures which the collective sense of the community proposes after such examination. It seems to me futile to expect unanimity in the community on such a subject, but the treatment of the subject on the lines proposed would be able to carry conviction to all public-spirited minds, and when they speak with one voice, I have not the slightest doubt that the Government would be only too pleased to undertake legislation in a practical spirit.

We must recognise that there are three distinct sides to the question of *wakf*. First, there is the juristic question of the interpretation of the authorities, which are by no means unanimous. Recent rulings of the British courts are in conflict with the carefully reasoned opinions of men like Mr. Ameer Ali, whose views must command the highest respect, on the question of the validity of family settlements. On this side of the question there is a voluminous body of literature, which is reinforced by the demands of those whose chief idea is the conservation of ancient families. This brings me to the second side of the question—that which touches the interests of individuals and families. In many cases these interests are inextricably mixed up with bequests for “pious uses” properly so called, religious purposes, charitable purposes, and purposes of public utility such as educational institutions. To separate and distinguish these different objects is certainly most difficult and not always possible; and yet the task must be attempted if we are to save the most beneficent *wakfs* from the deluge which threatens to swallow up all because certain incidents have been attached to some, which the courts, as at present constituted, hold to be inadmissible. Again the definitions of “pious uses,” “religion” as opposed to superstition, and “charity,” as opposed to the nurture of pampered and glittering indolence, vary with the evolution of ideas in the public mind. It is necessary in every individual *wakf* to see what is directly of public benefit and what in the first instance only serves private ends. Save both if you can; but if not, at least save the public benefactions. The third and most important side of the question of *wakf* relates to those which deal with public purposes only. It will be found that many of these have been diverted to private uses,

in other words misappropriated—or else applied to purposes other than those originally intended. In each individual case, as men of progress, we have to apply our best ideas to the solution of the difficulties; as practical men, we have to hold the balance even between the donors' wishes, private or vested interests, and public purposes pure and simple. In many cases it will be found that where public and private interests are mixed up, the private interests have been carefully watched by those whom they concerned, while the public interests have all lapsed through lack of organisation, and for want of a strong and healthy public opinion. We ought to create such an opinion, organise it, and make it audible. When a survey in detail, such as I am advocating, is carried out, we shall be able to see exactly our position with regard to *wakfs*, historically and prospectively, and there should be no difficulty in getting reasonable legislation passed in the public interests.

It is in inquiries and questions such as these that organisation is of the utmost value, but I agree with Sir Raymond West that, unless the organisation is vivified by ideals—strong, true, and honest—it would not help, nor give us those moral impulses which would carry us over difficulties. When I pleaded for greater respect for the history and traditions of the Indian Moslems, it was in no spirit of complaint, but

rather in the hope and belief that more knowledge of each other among the different races who have to deal with India might lead to a better understanding and facilitate the work of Government on the one side, and peace and progress on the other. On that head, the assurances of Sir Raymond West are most valuable, and, considering his distinguished career in Egypt and India, have the greatest significance.

I am glad my friend Mr. Theodore Morison was able to bring forward the question of university education. As a controversial topic I could not discuss it, which was, perhaps, as well, as it brought out the interesting and original points which Mr. Morison has put before the meeting.

Mr. Abdul Majid has tried to defend the Moham-medans from the charge of being antiquated. I am not sure that it is such a heinous charge after all. In some quarters it may even be gloried in, if the only alternative was the maxim: "Get in politely if you can, but if not, get in anyhow."

There is only one point of view not represented in the discussion. I wish it had been possible for an enlightened Hindu or Parsi gentleman to have told us how this presentation of the Muslim case strikes his community. But perhaps that may yet come when the hopes and aspirations of those communities are brought forward before this Society.

